

WU?[@]therep

THE WINSLOW BOY

by Terence Rattigan

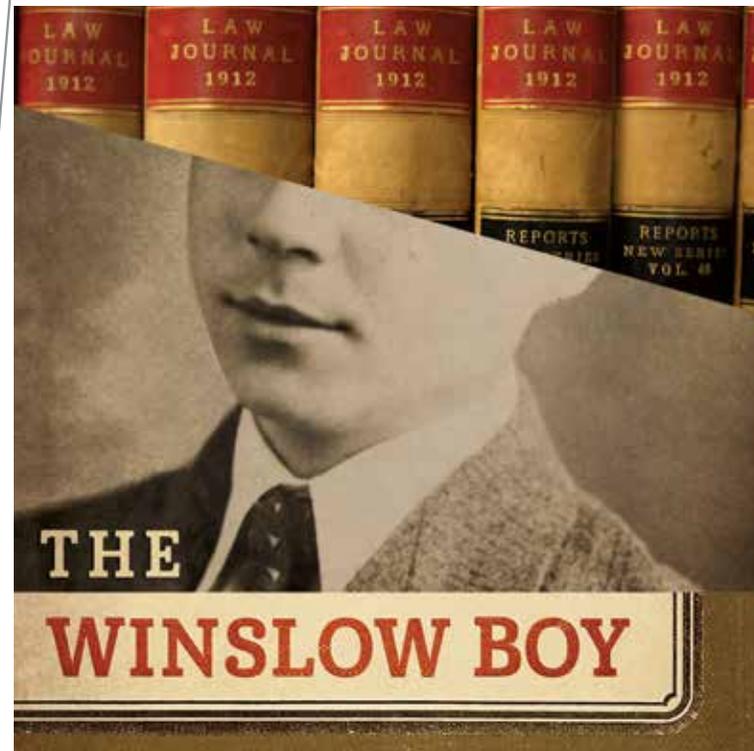
Directed by Steven Woolf

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the 411

At The Rep, we know that life moves fast—okay, really fast. But we also know that some things are worth

slowing down for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together **WU? @ THE REP**—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (**A/S/L**), a plot summary (**FYI**), biographical information (**F2F**), historical context (**B4U**), and other bits and pieces (**HTH**). Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means **IRL**, anyway.

CU@therep!



The Teacher's Lounge

In an effort to make our educational materials accessible to students and easy for educators to incorporate into the classroom, our study guide is written in a student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and post-performance discussions. You may also want to visit our website, www.repstl.org, for additional information including activity suggestions and behind-the-scenes information. Any materials, either from this guide or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom.

NEATO!

As always, we appreciate your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

WELCOME!

The desire to learn, insatiable when awakened, can sometimes lie dormant until touched by the right teacher or the right experience. We at The Rep are grateful to have the opportunity to play a role supporting you as you awaken the desire for learning in your students.

Based on a true event, *The Winslow Boy* is a study of how far a family will go in the fight for honor and the right to justice. As we watch, we are compelled to ask ourselves the questions: "What is the truth?" and "Can the sacrifice be too much?"

It would be a good idea to take a minute on the bus to give your students these quick theatre etiquette reminders:

- This show has one intermission; there will be time for bathroom breaks before the show and halfway through.
- The actors can hear the audience and appreciate the laughter, gasps and quiet attention to action. However, talking, moving around and eating is very distracting to others and can dampen the energy of what is happening on stage.
- Pictures, phone calls and texting are not allowed at any time during the performance.

Live theatre won't allow your students to take a passive role—they must work with us to create the experience which takes the learning deeper. Our unique ability to fuse words and images onstage allows your students to explore new ideas as well as excites their imaginations. We will do our part so your students will be stirred to understandings and self-awareness while delving into new and familiar worlds. You are doing your part by using The Rep to extend your intellectual and aesthetic curriculum.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marsha".

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A/S/L

RONNIE WINSLOW, ages 13 to 15 years old: a cadet at the Osborne Naval College

ARTHUR WINSLOW, early 60s: Ronnie's father

GRACE WINSLOW, early 50s: Ronnie's mother

CATHERINE "KATE" WINSLOW, late 20s: Ronnie's sister, a suffragette

DICKIE WINNSLOW, early 20s: Ronnie's older brother, currently an undergraduate at Oxford

VIOLET: the Winslows' elderly maid

JOHN WATHERSTONE, early 30s: Catherine's fiancé

DESMOND CURRY, 45: the Winslows' good friend and family solicitor, also a former star cricket player

MISS BARNES, 40: reporter for *The Daily News*

SIR ROBERT MORTON, early 40s: a highly sought-after barrister

RBT

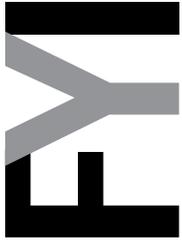
LABELS AND PERCEPTION

The "Winslow Boy" case receives a lot of media attention, and as most people know, fame can be a dangerous thing. The public perception of Ronnie and his family sways from negative to positive extremes, and everyone feels the intensity of the attention. Grace tells Arthur that she's afraid everyone will only see Ronnie as the "Winslow Boy," which isn't a positive or negative thing in itself, but the title is so distant from who Ronnie is. The public doesn't know him—only what he's been labeled. We're introduced to this concept early in the play when Dickie complains that he is consistently labeled the "bad son" while Ronnie is always considered the "good son." While Dickie may be making the comment in a good-humored manner, it's obvious this labeling still hurts. Being known and remembered for only one thing—especially on such a grand scale of celebrity—obviously has the potential to be very damaging.

PRINCIPLE AND SACRIFICE

One's values on right and wrong play a major role in this story. Many cannot believe that a case over five shillings can receive so much media attention and cause so much strain on a family's emotional, physical and financial well-being. However, although Arthur fears the sacrifice may be too much at times, he wholeheartedly wants to prove his son's innocence. Catherine, who isn't even sure Ronnie is innocent, wants to pursue the case at all costs because she feels Ronnie's right to a fair trial was violated. Many see the case as a petty issue, but Catherine and Arthur see it as a symbolic line between right and wrong. Even the matter-of-fact Sir Robert Morton seems to have a personally principled stake in the case by the end.





SPOILER ALERT!

IT'S A SUNDAY MORNING in July right before World War I. In the upper middle-class Winslow home in South Kensington, 13-year-old Ronnie Winslow is surprisingly home from school. The Winslows' maid, Violet, informs Ronnie that his parents are at church. As she heads upstairs to unpack his things, Ronnie takes out a letter and reads it, then disappears out to the garden. Just then his father, Arthur Winslow, walks in followed closely by his wife Grace, as well as Ronnie's older sister Catherine and older brother Dickie. The family chats, which eventually leads to the topic of Dickie failing his exams at Oxford. Dickie complains to his parents that they always favor Ronnie, who is a good student. Grace insists this isn't true, but Dickie remains unconvinced and leaves the room. Catherine then reminds her parents that her boyfriend John will be coming early before lunch to speak with Arthur—it's obvious that John will be asking for permission to marry Catherine. Grace asks Catherine if she is truly in love with John because she doesn't "behave" like a girl in love, which Grace attributes to Catherine's age; her generation is full of "modern women," and Catherine herself is a suffragette. However, Catherine assures her mother that she loves John very much.

JOHN SOON ARRIVES and asks for Arthur's permission to marry Catherine. Arthur gives his blessing, and later Catherine and John are alone speaking when Ronnie reappears. He shows Catherine the letter he's brought with him and promises her that he "didn't do it." Dickie then enters and Ronnie tells him that he's been kicked out of school for stealing five shillings. Catherine gets Grace, and they all agree not to tell Arthur just yet. Grace and Dickie take Ronnie upstairs to rest. Desmond Curry, the family's solicitor who's been in love with Catherine for years, then arrives for lunch and awkwardly congratulates Catherine and John on the

engagement. Soon Arthur, Grace, Dickie and Violet all enter the room, and everyone toasts to the happy couple. Unfortunately, Violet lets it slip that Ronnie is back. They all must then inform Arthur that Ronnie has been expelled. Arthur tells everyone to leave the room and brings in Ronnie. He tells Ronnie that he won't be angry so long as he tells the truth. He asks Ronnie very seriously if the theft charges against him are true, and Ronnie assures them that they're not. Arthur then calls the Royal Naval College.

NINE MONTHS LATER, Ronnie's story has become famous. Regardless of public opinion, Arthur continues to fight strongly for his son, even as it negatively affects his health and causes John and Catherine's wedding to be postponed multiple times. Since Ronnie's expulsion, the Winslows have been demanding a full inquiry into the case because they feel the evidence against Ronnie was insufficient. Arthur tries everything he can, including enlisting the help of the Sir Robert Morton, the most sought-after barrister at the time. However, Catherine does not believe Morton is a good choice; not only has he spoken out against women's suffrage, but she believes he will consider the case trivial and won't give it the attention it needs.

MORTON SOON ARRIVES at the Winslow residence to meet Ronnie. Morton questions Ronnie intensely and because he can't remember many details of the day of the incident, Morton accuses him of being guilty and tells him he should confess to save his family any further stress. Ronnie insists he's innocent and becomes very upset. The entire family is angry at Morton for how he's treating Ronnie. However, before he leaves, Morton says he will take on Ronnie's case because he's "plainly innocent."



NINE MONTHS LATER the case is a very heated debate in the House of Commons. Arthur is thrilled it's getting so much attention, but Grace fears it may not be worth the strain on Arthur's health and the amount of money they're spending. She tells Arthur he'd better be pursuing it so strongly for justice and not for pride.

AFTER GRACE LEAVES the room, Morton and Catherine come back from a debate on the case in the House. Morton is feeling confident that the tide is turning in their favor, making Arthur very happy until he receives a letter from Colonel Watherstone, John's father. Colonel Watherstone says the Winslow family has become a nationwide "laughingstock," and if they don't drop the case, he will pressure his son to end the engagement with Catherine.

ARTHUR TELLS MORTON and Catherine that he feels the family has finally sacrificed too much, and he plans to drop the case. But Catherine tells her father that John will marry her no matter what his father plans to do—though she is visibly shaken. Just then, John arrives and requests a conversation with Catherine alone. He tells her he begged his father not to send the letter and that he fears for how he and Catherine will survive without his father's support. He asks Catherine if the whole thing is truly worth it; how can she even be sure her brother is innocent? She says she's not sure, but that's not the point. The point is that Ronnie was deprived of a fair trial—a fundamental human right. During their discussion, Morton receives a call that the House finally decided to bring the case to trial, and the Winslows are elated. However, John still cannot understand Catherine's convictions and breaks off the engagement.

FIVE MONTHS LATER, nearly two years after Ronnie was expelled, the court is close to reaching a verdict. However, Arthur's health has greatly deteriorated. Although Catherine and Grace can attest that Morton has done a fantastic job presenting the case and seemingly discrediting those against Ronnie, the judge does not seem sympathetic, and they're very worried they may lose in what is their last chance.

THE DAY BEFORE the verdict is supposed to be decided, Desmond proposes to Catherine. He knows she can never feel more than friendship for him, but he promises that he will be the most devoted husband possible. Catherine asks for a few days to consider the proposal. During this conversation, Desmond also confesses to Catherine that Morton turned down the opportunity of being appointed Lord Chief Justice so that he could continue defending the Winslow case. It's obvious that Catherine is deeply touched by this, especially having misjudged Morton's integrity before.

LATER CATHERINE TELLS her father about Desmond's proposal. Arthur tells her she shouldn't marry a man she doesn't love. Just then Violet bursts in and tells them the jury reached its verdict early and found Ronnie innocent. Morton arrives and congratulates the Winslows on the victory. Later when Catherine is alone with Morton, she tells him how grateful she is for his dedication to the cause. Morton tells her he was only fighting for what was right, but Catherine knows the victory is meaningful to Morton on a personal level as well as professional. They eventually part ways with Morton saying he hopes to see her again. She tells him he most definitely will—one day in the courtroom, as his equal.





TERENCE RATTIGAN

Terence Rattigan, the playwright behind *The Winslow Boy*, was born in London in 1911 to the diplomat Frank Rattigan and his wife Vera. His parents' marriage was a troubled one, much due to Frank's womanizing ways, and Rattigan was said to have vowed at the age of seven to be a writer and to never marry because "wives can be an awful handicap to writers."

Rattigan attended Trinity College, Oxford, and experienced success at the early age of 25 with the farce *French Without Tears*, performed in 1936. Taking place at a "cram school" (a specialized school that trains students to pass examinations), the play's characters learn French for business reasons. After its debut, *French Without Tears* ran for 1,000 performances in London.

Unafraid of controversy, Rattigan wrote *Follow My Leader* in 1938 with a friend from Oxford. A farce about the rise of Adolph Hitler, censors banned it because they considered it too offensive to a foreign country and its powerful leader. It eventually was performed in 1940 but closed after only a few weeks. In the spring of 1940, after Hitler invaded Denmark, Rattigan joined the Royal Air Force (R.A.F) where he served as an air gunner and radio operator. It was his experiences in the service on which he based his next play *Flare Path*, which tells the story of R.A.F airmen and their wives and loved ones during the night and following morning of a night bombing mission over Germany. The play was popular with audiences and critics for catching the public mood of Britain during the war.

In the decade following the war, Rattigan wrote two of his best-known plays, *The Winslow Boy*, which was first performed in 1946 and won a New York Critics Award for Best Foreign Play during its American run, and *Separate Tables*, which was first

performed in 1954 and explored relationships between a disgraced politician and his ex-wife, and a spinster and a man posing as a retired army officer. Rattigan eventually adapted both these plays into screenplays. Both were successful, especially *Separate Tables*, which earned Rattigan a Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar nomination.

In his personal life, Rattigan was in the same social circles as many of Hollywood's elite, including Laurence Olivier, Vivien Leigh and Richard Burton. He was known to be gay, but remained in the closet publicly because homosexuality was against the law during most of his lifetime. Although his friends and theatre peers knew about his sexuality, many theatre scholars believe Rattigan's inability to be open about it on a public level led to themes of sexual repression in many of his plays, including *The Deep Blue Sea* (1952). Supposedly inspired by the suicide of one of Rattigan's former lovers, the play told the story of a woman who attempts suicide after having her heart broken by a man she left her husband for. She fails and eventually befriends a homosexual man who has also been ostracized by society.

Rattigan was recognized for his contributions to theatre when they knighted him in 1971. The last play he wrote was *Cause Célèbre*, a story about the joint murder trial of two lovers. Its opening night in July 1977 was Rattigan's last public appearance. Suffering from cancer, he took an evening out of the hospital to attend. He died just a few months later in November at the age of 66.





DODDERY: shaky or trembling

MODS: short for Honour Moderations, which are the first set of examinations at Oxford University during some courses

GRAMOPHONE: a record player

DRAWING ROOM: a formal reception room

SUFFRAGETTE: a female advocate for the women's right to vote

SUBALTERN: junior officer

PER ANNUM: Latin for "each year"

CACOPHONOUS: harsh or unpleasant sound

INFERNAL: very annoying

CONFOUNDED: bewildered or confused

DIN: noise

DOWRY: money that a wife's family brings to her husband at marriage

PINCH: to steal

SOLICITOR: in England, a type of lawyer who advises clients and represents them before the lower courts and prepares cases for barristers to try in the higher courts

VOLTAIRE: a French writer and philosopher famous for his wit

AUGURY: divination

DECANT: to pour

OLIGARCHY: a government ruled by a small group

COLLUSIVE: involving secret cooperation

SANATORIUM: a hospital

INIQUITOUS: wicked or wrong

SHAMMING: pretending

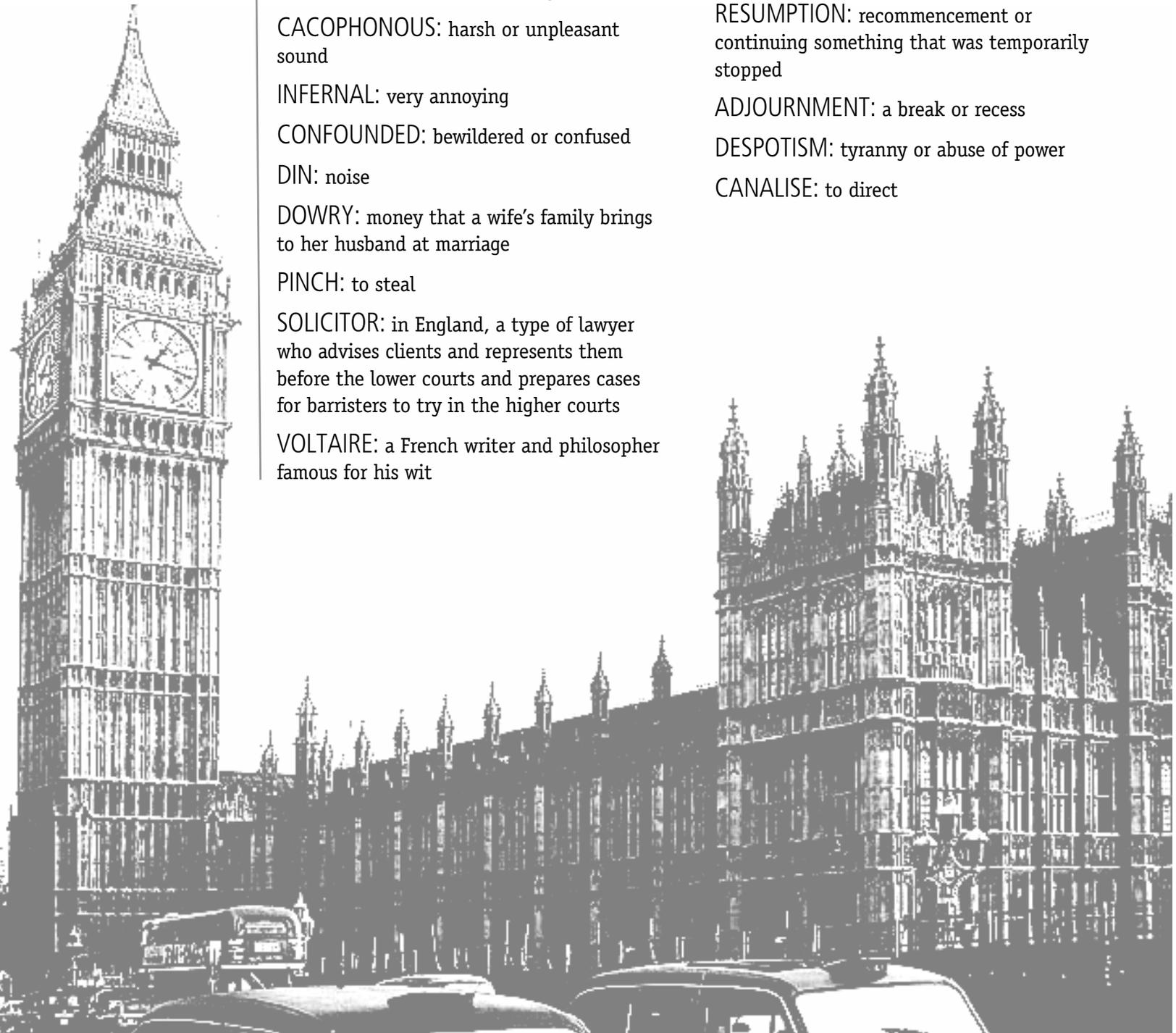
PROPULSION: force

RESUMPTION: recommencement or continuing something that was temporarily stopped

ADJOURNMENT: a break or recess

DESPOTISM: tyranny or abuse of power

CANALISE: to direct



GEORGE ARCHER-SHEE, THE REAL WINSLOW BOY

The subject matter of *The Winslow Boy* is especially interesting because it's derived from a true story. Ronnie's character is based on a young man named George Archer-Shee who attended Royal Naval College. In October 1908, at the age of 13, he was accused of stealing a five shilling postal order from another cadet's locker. Although George protested that he was innocent, he was expelled without a trial. The Archer-Shees, whose family motto happened to be *Vincit veritas* (Truth conquers), backed George adamantly.

The Archer-Shees had moved from Bristol to Gloucestershire when George's father Martin retired from his economic advisory job with the Bank of England. George was the youngest of five children, and his older brother, a politician, immediately asked his acquaintance Sir Edward Carson, a famous barrister at the time, for his help. After interrogating George himself, Carson believed he was innocent and took on the case.

It was incredibly difficult at first because the Navy was protected by the Crown, which meant the case could not be taken to court as a civil action. However, Carson contested the immunity by citing an old law called "petition of right," which contains the words "let right be done" and sets out certain liberties that the Crown cannot infringe upon—including George's right to a fair trial.

That trial began in 1910, despite the Admiralty's efforts to close the case, which, at this point, had gained national attention. During the trial, Carson argued that George



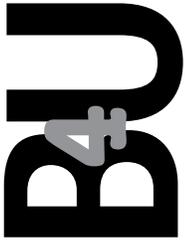
had been unfairly expelled. The woman working as the postmistress during the crime had originally said that the cadet who cashed the stolen five shilling postal note had been the same one who had asked for an order for fifteen and six—which George admitted to. However, she could not physically identify George as the thief; Carson portrayed the postmistress to the jury as an honest but confused woman. George himself was put on the stand

and grilled for two days by the other side. However, George's responses all seemed to support his innocence.

On the fourth day of the trial, the Admiralty gave in, and George was proclaimed innocent. Carson was in tears, and jury members even left the box to shake hands with George's family. Reportedly, much like Ronnie in *The Winslow Boy*, George didn't seem as concerned about the case as everyone else was. In fact, he overslept the day the court exonerated him and missed the pivotal moment.

Unfortunately, even though Archer-Shees won in court, they experienced tragedy over the next few years. George's father Martin passed away the following year, his health having suffered greatly from the stress of the ordeal, which included trying to recover the fortune he had spent on legal costs from the Admiralty. And sadly, George joined the Army in 1914 during the outbreak of World War I and was killed in the First Battle of Ypres that year.





WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN BRITAIN

Catherine is arguably one of the strongest characters in *The Winslow Boy* in terms of standing by her convictions. A staunch supporter of the women's suffrage movement, Catherine is determined to see justice done. She doesn't defend Ronnie because she's certain of his innocence, but rather because she's certain of his rights.

You may know a bit about women's suffrage in the United States, but do you know the path it took in Great Britain? It occurred during the same time as the U.S. movement—gaining momentum in the second half of the 19th century and achieving victory in the decade following World War I.

Here is a brief timeline to brush you up on this important part of British and women's history:

1867

Philosopher John Stuart Mill presents a petition in Parliament to include women's suffrage in the Reform Act of 1867.

1897

Nearly 17 societies fighting for women's suffrage join together to form the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) under the leadership of feminist Millicent Fawcett. Members of NUWSS were referred to as "suffragists" who fought for their cause through peaceful and legal means, such as presenting petitions and bills to Parliament.

1903

Frustrated by NUWSS's lack of progress, political activist Emmeline Pankhurst founds the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). Members, who were referred to as "suffragettes," were encouraged to take a more militant approach, which included heckling politicians, practicing civil disobedience and inciting riots.

1910-1912

Parliament considers several Conciliation Bills, which would have given some women the right to vote, but none pass.

1914

Many women's suffrage proponents cease their efforts at the outbreak of World War I so that they may focus on the war effort. During the war, which lasted until 1918, an estimated two million women replace men in traditionally male jobs.

1916

A conference on electoral reform is held in the House of Commons where limited women's suffrage is recommended.

1918

The Representation of the People Act is passed on February 6 giving women over the age of 30 the right to vote if their husband meets a property qualification.

Women vote in a general election for the first time on December 14 with 8.5 million women eligible.

1928

The Equal Franchise Act is passed, giving all women over the age of 21 equal voting rights with men; 15 million women are eligible.

1929

On May 30, women aged between 21 and 29 vote for the first time in a general election.



Ronnie's case doesn't have anything to do with women's suffrage, so why do you think the playwright decided to make his sister a suffragette?

What does it tell us about Catherine's character?



CAUSES CÉLÈBRE

There are many incidents of wrongdoing, whether they lead to a trial or not, that grab the national spotlight. They become *causes célèbres*, a term that describes an issue or incident that causes a great deal of controversy and a heated public debate. There are many reasons why they attain such widespread fame—they may redefine how we view the reach of the law, lessen our trust in the media, involve a celebrity, or reveal salacious details of people’s personal lives. The public gets engrossed in a way that’s like watching a movie.

The case of young George Archer-Shee grabbed headlines as it involved the notable barrister Sir Edward Carson and reevaluated the rights of the individual against the Crown—all over a matter involving five shillings. It seems Terence Rattigan had a special interest in causes célèbres; in addition to *The Winslow Boy*, his last play was called *Cause Célèbre* (1977), which was based on the true story of Alma Rattenbury who was tried in 1935 with her teenaged lover for murdering her husband Frank Rattenbury.

Now that you know what a cause célèbre is, you can probably think of a few you know about and that have taken place during your lifetime. To give you context on what were considered causes célèbres of past centuries, here are a few examples. Do you think similar cases would cause such a stir today? Why or why not?

WHAT: THE DREYFUS AFFAIR

WHEN: 1894-1906

WHERE: FRANCE

This political crisis centered on the guilt or innocence of Jewish Army Captain Alfred Dreyfus who had been convicted of treason for allegedly selling military secrets to the Germans. At first, the public supported the conviction; it was believed that opinion was easily swayed due to publicity put out by anti-Semitic newspapers at the time. The Dreyfus family fought for the conviction to be overturned based on emerging evidence in 1896 that incriminated another officer named Ferdinand Walsin-Esterhazy. The Dreyfus side slowly picked up supporters including major journalists and politicians. Esterhazy was eventually acquitted after a court-martial, but much of the public protested, including novelist Émile Zola who wrote a letter titled “J’accuse” published in a newspaper claiming the Army was trying to cover up its mistake. Zola was found guilty of libel, and the situation found new widespread public attention. A big break in the case came in August 1898 when it was found that a document implicating Dreyfus was a forgery created by a Major in order to protect the Army. Those against reopening the case claimed the opposition was just attempting to discredit the Army, and in turn, weaken France. Those fighting for Captain Dreyfus’ exoneration objected to individual liberties being violated for the sake of national security; they wanted to put the Army and under parliamentary control.

Eventually a new court-martial found Dreyfus guilty again, but in order to resolve the heated issue, he was pardoned and set free. However, the Army did not publicly declare Dreyfus’ innocence. It is believed that the way the Dreyfus affair put the Army and anti-Semitic groups in the spotlight paved the way for the formal separation of church and state under the Third Republic in 1905.



WHAT: WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND AND THE SHAKESPEARE FABRICATIONS

WHEN: 1790s

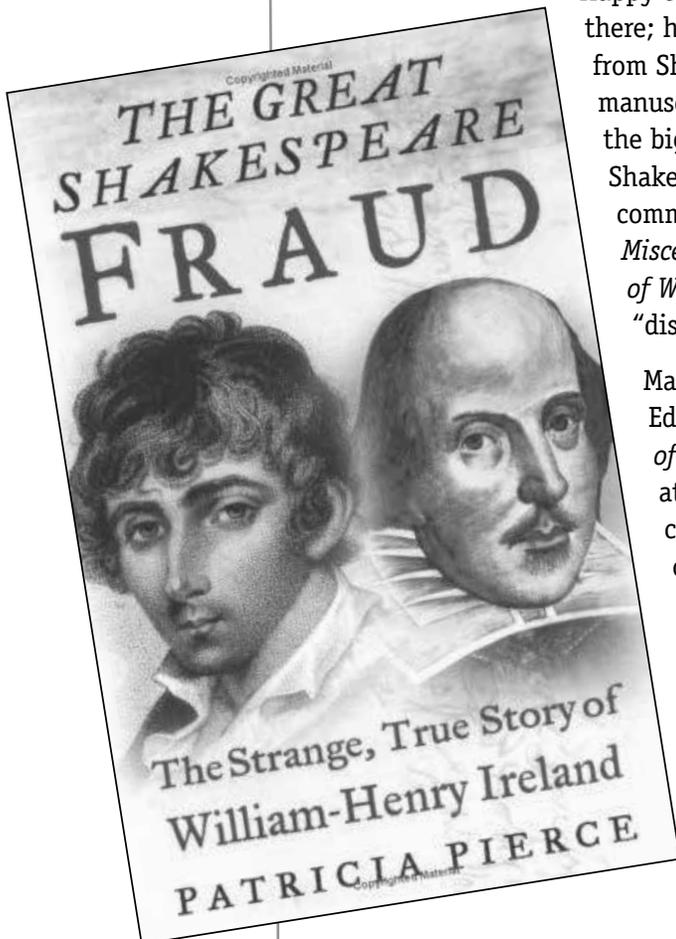
WHERE: LONDON

Samuel Ireland was an artist in London who greatly admired William Shakespeare. He read Shakespeare's works nightly to his family, including his son William Henry, and collected memorabilia and artifacts connected with the famous writer. William often emulated his father's Shakespeare obsession to the point where he decided to forge a document because his father coveted something in Shakespeare's writing. As an apprentice to a lawyer who specialized in property transfers, William had access to mortgages and deeds, some on centuries-old documents. He forged several pages as Shakespeare's work with his signature and presented them to his father, telling him that he discovered them in the possession of a wealthy acquaintance who wished to remain anonymous. Surprisingly, an expert deemed them authentic, and Samuel was thrilled.



Happy to give his father one of his lifelong dreams, William didn't stop there; he eventually forged love letters to Shakespeare's wife, books from Shakespeare's library with several notes in the margins, as well as manuscript pages for the plays *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. And in probably the biggest moment of hubris, William produced a yet unheard of Shakespeare play called *Vortigern and Rowena*. A professional theatre commissioned the play, and prior to the opening, Samuel published *Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments under the Hand and Seal of William Shakespeare* in January of 1796, which brought William's "discoveries" into the public eye.

Many criticized their authenticity, including Shakespearean scholar Edmond Malone, who published *An Inquiry into the Authenticity of Certain Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments*, which attacked the documents' legitimacy in a comprehensive 400-page critique. Eventually, William admitted to his forgeries, which not only destroyed his and his father's reputations but also their relationship. They were estranged when Samuel passed away in 1800. William went on to live a quiet life until his death in 1835.



IRL

WHAT: SCOPES TRIAL

WHEN: 1925

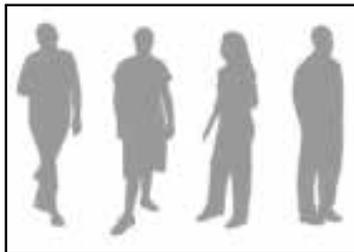
WHERE: DAYTON, TENNESSEE

Also known as the “Monkey Trial,” this cause célèbre debated the right to teach evolution in schools. There had been a newly passed state law that forbade any theory being taught other than the Biblical account of God creating man. John Scopes was a 24-year-old substitute teacher who included Darwin’s theory of evolution in his curriculum at a public high school. He was arrested for breaking the law, but the American Civil Liberties Union saw an opportunity to attack what it considered to be an unjust law and backed Scopes’ defense. His lawyer was Clarence Darrow, a defense attorney famous for representing labor and radical figures and who was also a proclaimed agnostic. The state attorney was the former candidate for the U.S. presidency and outspoken Christian William Jennings Bryan, who believed the Bible should be interpreted literally. Dubbed the “trial of the century,” it was attended by hundreds of reporters in the stiflingly heat of July and soon became a symbolic fight of the Bible’s authority vs. Darwin’s theory. Bryan argued that evolutionary theory made humans “indistinguishable among the mammals.” Darrow attacked the Genesis story saying that in today’s modern thinking, no intelligent person, even if he or she is a Christian, could believe that a higher being created the world in seven days.

The jury ended up finding Scopes guilty of violating the law and fined him \$100. Bryan’s side was elated in its victory and the law stood. However, Darrow’s side was victorious in its own right for publicizing scientific evidence of evolution and igniting a public conversation. The press reported at the time that “Bryan had won the case, he had lost the argument.” Eventually evolution would be included in schoolbooks, but a law overturning its prohibition was not created until 1968 in the Supreme Court decision *Epperson v. Arkansas*.



SWDYT?



Arthur: “What shall I say?”

Morton: “I hardly think it matters. Whatever you say will have little bearing on what they write.”

Arthur and Morton are discussing what Arthur’s comments should be to the press. These remarks would be just as relevant today as they were during when the play takes place. This view on media can be considered cynical as if it’s belittling journalism, which is considered an integral part of a democratic society, or it can be considered realistic because, as the old adage goes, “you can’t believe everything you read.” What do you think of Morton’s response? Do you agree with him? What would your advice to Arthur be?